For some time past cardamom plants had been subject to various diseases, causing destruction and loss of produce, and even the payment of kist had become difficult. The Member prayed that Government might devise some remedy for the protection of the cardamom plants from the pests referred to.

In regard to the extraction of tinctures, it was done in foreign countries, while the poor cultivators in Travancore had to sell their produce at a low price. As it would be a source of great profit if cardamom tincture factories could be established in the country, the Member suggested that the necessary plant might be installed by Government and the industry worked under the supervision of the Director of Industries.

Dewan's Reply.—In regard to the lands surrounding the cardamom estates on which you have put up factories and buildings, and which the Revenue Department is asking you to vacate, the Commissioner, Devicolam, says that he has made a reference to the Government as to whether registry can be made. I shall issue orders to register such lands to the cardamom ryots concerned. Then, you will not have to remove the buildings.

As regards factories for extracting cardamom oil, cardamom cultivation has itself to be established before we can think of such factories. An officer is working on the spot to eradicate the cardamom pest. You should first seek his assistance and try to eradicate the pest, and then it will be time enough to consider the question of distilling cardamoms. We shall, if necessary, ask our Industrial Chemist to conduct experiments in the preparation of cardamom tinctures. First of all you must try to get rid of the pest.

As regards the trace between the Bison Valley and Periakanal it is reported by the P. W. D. Sub-Division Officer who inspected the place that, as it is very steep with a gradient of 1 in 10 and 1 in 12, it is very difficult to make it a cartable road. It is not possible for the Government to make a road for the benefit of an Estate or two.

Member.—The place is one where three thousand acres are under cultivation and five hundred people are living.

Dewan.—The Sub-Divisional Officer considers that the number of ryots benefited is not large.

Member.—I request you to come and inspect the place personally.

Dewan.—The first essential is a big central road from Munnar to Peermade. After that is done, we can take up the smaller roads. Traces cannot be maintained for the benefit of isolated estates. If the interested people came forward and offer to improve traces and apply for some contribution, the matter will be considered. Government are now giving contribution in regard to the maintenance of some traces on the Peermade side. For the Udumbanshola-Tevaram trace, Government are spending Rs. 80 per mile for maintenance. I intend going to the Cardamom Hills in May and you may then show me these traces.

91. Removal of the toll-gate at Mundakayam from its present site.

Mr. J. R. Vincent (Member, Mundakayam Planters' Association) said that the imposition of tolls was a primitive method of raising revenue and that his association, nevertheless, did not ask for the abolition of the toll, but only wanted the toll gate being removed from its present site. Admitting that the Government had a right to raise revenue by means of tolls, the gate should not have been located where it now stood, as the revenue derived was not considerable. Further the present site was extremely inconvenient to the estates, as the people going from one estate to another had to pass the gate. Several sites to the east and west of the present one were more convenient and he suggested the removal of the gate to the 37th mile or back to the 14th mile or to the 19th or the 20th mile. If the gate was shifted to the 14th or the 19th mile, it would bring in a large revenue to Government and would, at the same time, remove the inconvenience to which the members of the estate were put at present.

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Dewan's reply.—I do not remember the circumstances under which the toll gate was shifted from Vazhur to its present position. Government do want revenue and the reason for shifting the toll gate was the expectation of the Government to get more revenue thereby. Tolls are, no doubt, a primitive method of making revenue, but sometimes it is unavoidable. The aspect of the matter which you now present to me was perhaps not known to the Chief Engineer who recommended the shifting. He now says that Kanjirapalli will be a far better place for the location of the toll gate. For the present year it must continue where it is. As to where it should be located next year, I shall make the necessary enquiry and decide.

92. The Quilon-Trivandrum Railway: its extension and improved working.

Mr. S. Ganapati Pillai (Member, Trading Classes, Trivandrum) stated that, though his friend, Mr. Adam Sait and he himself had been advocating the extension of the railway to the town of Trivandrum for the last five years, no action appeared to have been taken in the matter. In the Dewan's opening address, it was stated that arrangements were almost complete for the commencement of a reconnaissance survey for the extension of the railway from Trivandrum to Nagercoil and Government seemed to require the people to satisfy themselves that the extension of the railway to the town of Trivandrum would naturally follow when the extension of the line from Trivandrum to Nagercoil was taken up. The Member observed that the survey and the construction of the line to Nagercoil would take not less than seven or eight years, and that it would, in the meantime, be hard to ask the merchants and other inhabitants of Trivandrum to wait and continue to suffer all the difficulties which they now experienced on account of the location of the station three miles off. Further, no useful purpose was being served by the extension of the line to the pier; and if the money spent on that work had been utilised to connect Chalai, the grievances of the people would have been redressed long ago. The Member, therefore, requested that immediate steps be taken to extend the railway to the town of Trivandrum without waiting for the proposed extension of the line from Trivandrum to Nagercoil.

The Member represented further that arrangements be made—

(1) to supply good and new carriages for the Travancore Branch instead of the old and rotten ones which were being used at present;

(2) to provide big engines capable of carrying a larger number of carriages in the shuttle trains;

(3) to provide additional accommodation for passengers in the waiting sheds at the stations between Quilon and Trivandrum; and

(4) to supply drinking water to the passengers at the eight intermediate stations between Quilon and Trivandrum during hot weather, by giving effect to the orders already passed by the railway authorities in the matter.

Dewan's reply.—You have rightly guessed why the extension of the railway to the town has not yet been taken up. It has to wait till the line to Nagercoil is surveyed. I do not think that this survey will take 7 or 8 years. The survey may be expected to be finished in about 10 months. Afterwards we shall have to settle the question of finance. I think you can confidently expect the execution of the work in a couple of years. Supposing that the line to Nagercoil has to take a different alignment, all the money spent on this extension to the town, if it is done immediately, will be a waste. You will, therefore, have to wait patiently for a year or two more. The extension to the town will become part and parcel of the Nagercoil line.

In regard to the rolling stock, that is an oft-recurring complaint. The rolling stock of the Shencottah-Trivandrum Section is not a water-tight compartment like that of the Shoranur-Cochin railway, which is an isolated line. So far as the Shencottah-Trivandrum Section is concerned, we share both the advantages and the disadvantages of its being part of a big railway system. We have sanctioned some money for additional rolling stock and this stock will shortly arrive. Then the complaint will, I trust, be not so great.

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